

# Creating Emotional Health:

## Intervention Strategies for Girls and Women

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# Intervention

- Self-Help
- Psychotherapy
- Medication
- Medical
- Holistic
- Alternative
- From “fixing” to “creating”



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# Tx for Women:

- 1) Woman must become director of own treatment
- 2) Move from illness-focused model to Recovery-focused, Strengths-based model
- 3) Respect for unique make-up of women and unique cultural aspects is a must!

Surgeon General's Meeting  
-Kathryn Power, SAMHSA

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Self-Help



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Have You Cared for Your Brain Today?

NURSE  
Program

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Brain Know-How

- Consider how your body lets your body know it's in distress?
- How does your brain let you know?



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### NURSE:

N= Nourishment & Needs  
U= Understanding  
R= Rest & Relaxation  
S= Spirituality  
E= Exercise

-From "Women's Moods: What every woman must know about hormones, the brain, and emotional health." Sichel, D. & Driscoll, J.W.

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### Nourishment

- Food Guide Pyramid
- Eliminate alcohol
- Reexamine caffeine, nicotine
- Daily multivitamin/ supplements (Calcium, B-vitamins)
- Omega 3 fatty acids (3-6 grams/day)
- 64 oz. water

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### Nutrition

- Eating for: Weight loss? Health? Vibrant health?
- Eat fresh foods. Mostly plants. Not too much
- Get honest about emotional-food connection
- Eat whole-grain complex carbs, enough protein & "healthy" fats



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### Needs

- Identify needs: What are your needs?
  - Emotionally
  - Physically
  - Socially
  - Intellectually
  - Spiritually
- What can you do to meet these needs and replenish yourself?



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### Understanding

- “Your feelings have an anatomy– they are rooted in the brain structures.” (Sichel and Driscoll, p. 111)
  - Psychotherapy (provides you with intellectual skills to work with your physiology)
  - Talking with an understanding support person
  - Writing down experiences or emotions

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### Rest

- “It is during sleep that the brain biochemically resets itself, allowing hormones, neurotransmitters, and peptides to replenish themselves.” (Sichel & Driscoll, p. 112)



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Relaxation



- What do you do to relax?
- Stress-reduction techniques
  - Meditation
  - Visualization
  - Mindfulness
  - Biofeedback
  - Progressive Muscle Relaxation

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Spirituality

- Get in touch and reconnect with your spiritual nature and the meaning in your life
  - Church
  - Meditation
  - Prayer
  - Reading sacred texts
  - Music
  - Nature
  - Service
  - Family



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Exercise

- Benefits:
  - Lower cancer rates (37%)
  - Better immune system
  - Longer life expectancy
  - Lower heart attack risk
  - Less depression
  - Better mental health
  - Improved cognitive function in middle age+
  - More relaxation, assertiveness, enthusiasm
  - Stronger bones
  - More restful sleep
  - Higher self-esteem
  - Better body-image



(Northrup, 2006)

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### NURSE for Hormones

- Nourishment: Low fat diet (soy-based foods)
  - Supplements: calcium, multivitamin, antioxidants, vit. E (hot flashes), omega-3's
- Understanding:
  - Teach connection between NT's and Estrogen
  - Use PMS/PM rating chart
  - Help understand pros/cons of HRT
- Rest:
  - Sleep is especially critical (naps too!)

(Sichel & Driscoll, 1999)

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### NURSE

- 1) Allows you to maintain a healthy brain & emotional stability (not a “cure”) and eventually heal your soul
- 2) Cares for the whole woman, not just one component
- 3) Can begin as “self-help” but can also be utilized by providers to ensure a higher quality of care

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### Medical & Alternative Treatment Options

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### Alternative Interventions

- Traditional Chinese Medicine
- Acupuncture
- Acupressure
- Massage & Relaxation
- Light Therapy
- Nutritional Supplements (Omega 3)
- Hormone Therapy
- Hormone Replacement Therapy



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### Oral Contraceptives



- Birth control pills have significant adverse affects on mood in 40% of women
- OC's are widely prescribed for tx of PMS
- Depo-Provera
- Fertility Drugs

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### Women and Psychotropic Medications

- Medication can help heal the brain
- Medication + Therapy= “Best Practice”
- Women’s Brains & Medication



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# Psychotherapeutic Treatment

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## Tx for Women:

- Integrative approach is key!
  - Take into account all aspects of woman's needs
  - Must include care of children and family
  - Providers need to erase the tightly drawn lines between medical and mental health



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## Psychotherapy

- Assessment of whole woman
- Process trauma/ loss/ emotion
- Learn coping strategies
- Hormones & Brain
- Build on positives
- Tools
- Resources
- Support



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© 2004 New Line Animation - jordan-jones.com

I HATE MY THIGHS!

I can't be sure, but I have a feeling it's a girl.

—COURTESY—

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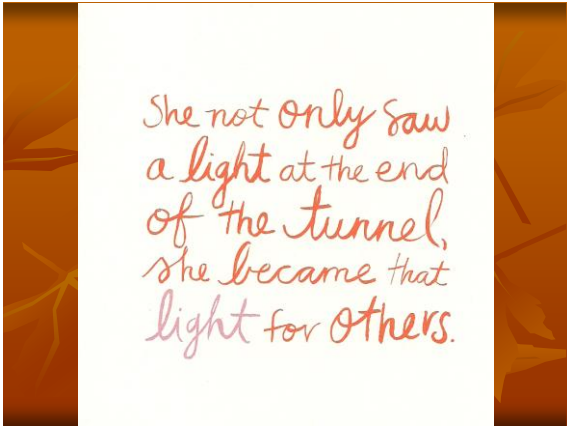
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Creating Emotional Health



*"I can clear a rose garden, but at some point I have to plant a rose." –Martin Seligman*

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Creating Emotional Health

- Positive Psychology Interventions
  - Optimism (ABCDE, Putting in Perspective)
  - Positive Emotion: 3 blessings, Start what went well
  - Engagement with signature strengths
  - Meaning & purpose: Altruism v. Pleasure
  - Teach gratitude: Gratitude visit exercise

[www.authentichappiness.org](http://www.authentichappiness.org)

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### New Wisdom



ing Mental Wellness/Heal  
complex emotions as “a gift”

- “Dark times” as the body’s way to go deeper
- From “Better” to “Better than Better”
- From suffering to Flourishing!

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*“The great loneliness—like the loneliness a caterpillar endures when she wraps herself in a silky shroud and begins the long transformation from chrysalis to butterfly. It seems we too must go through such a time, when life as we have known it is over—when being a caterpillar feels somehow false and yet we don’t know who we are supposed to become. All we know is that something bigger is calling us to change. And though we must make the journey alone, and even if suffering is our only companion, soon enough we will become a butterfly, soon enough we will taste the rapture of being alive.”*

~Elizabeth Lesser, p. 51

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### Arizona Postpartum Wellness Coalition

**Mission Statement:**

The Arizona Postpartum Wellness Coalition is dedicated to improving the pregnancy and postpartum experience of Arizona families through increasing awareness of the serious nature of perinatal mood disorders and improving access to available screening, treatment options and resources in Arizona.

[www.azpostpartum.org](http://www.azpostpartum.org)  
888-434-MOMS (AZ Warmline)

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